

Focus: STEM in Action: Dr. Gigi Richard

This feature, to run through 2014, highlights an interview with a STEM professional living in Colorado.

In this STEM in Action interview, Dr. Gigi Richard provides excellent insight into her work, enriching students with STEM experiences, and working with libraries.

A resident of Colorado for 25 years, Dr. Richard holds an M.S. and Ph.D. from Colorado State University in civil and hydraulic engineering and a B.S. in civil engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Throughout her career, she's shown a commitment to sharing STEM with the general public through outreach events and presentations.

Colorado State Library (CSL): Tell us a little about yourself. What do you do?

Dr. Richard: I am a professor in the Geology program at Colorado Mesa University (CMU) in Grand Junction, CO, but I'm not a geologist! I'm actually a civil engineer who studies water and rivers. Water is an important force in sculpting the Earth's surface and so my studies overlap with the field of geology. I am also the Faculty Director of the Water Center at CMU. The Water Center focuses on education and research related to water issues in the Upper Colorado River Basin, which are very complex and also very important to those of us living in Colorado.

One of the things I love about my work is that I can contribute to sustainable

solutions related to our complicated water issues in Colorado. Helping college students and the general public have a better understanding of their role in the water cycle and in the environment in general is one of my passions. Another passion is growing, cooking and eating delicious locally grown produce, which also contributes to sustainability!

CSL: Why is STEM important? Why should it matter to kids and teens?

Dr. Richard: Development of STEM fields can lead to amazing new solutions to many of society's problems. As human population grows, global climate changes and environmental impacts increase, we will be faced with more and more challenging problems related to our interaction with the environment. Deeper scientific understanding of natural earth processes and human's role in changing those processes is essential to effectively mitigating our impacts on the environment so that future generations can continue to be supported.

Also, STEM should matter to kids and teens because it's STEM disciplines that provide us with the amazing technology we all enjoy...iPhones, Facebook, Netflix, and so many others.

See STEM in Action, p. 7

Welcome to the Youth Services News!

This newsletter will feature articles on learning development, summer reading updates, timely tidbits, children's and teen literature news, and an exchange of what's happening in CO libraries.

Would you like to see a topic covered in the newsletter? Want to share info about your programs? Or perhaps contribute an article? Let me know!

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SRP 2014: News & Ideas

2014 Colorado Teen Video Contest

25 teens or teen teams submitted videos for the 2014 CO Teen Video Contest (the most of any of the 26 participating states)! Teens were invited to create a 30-90 second public service announcement promoting the 2014 summer reading program



2014 TVC - CO - Inspire

and theme, "Spark a Reaction," to other teens. The judging panels had a very difficult decision but have arrived at a winner; Bethany Hagerott of Longmont submitted the winning video, entitled "[Inspire](#)," through the Longmont Public Library. Bethany said about winning the contest, "Reading has always been a big part of my life--from Dr. Seuss to Charles Dickens. I hope that my video and the other videos in the contest can inspire a new generation to enjoy reading." Colorado also recognizes two videos as runners-up, both from the Denver Public Library, entitled "Spark and Emotion" and "Reading to Solve Depression," as well as five honorable mentions. [All eight finalist videos](#) are available for viewing!

SRP PSAs for Kids is Available Too

The public service announcement for kids is now available as well, and it features cute animation with kids and robots doing science experiments. To watch and download the PSA, go to the [CSLP website](#), log in (if you haven't before, it's free and easy), click on Proprietary Downloads (under the 2nd yellow stripe), then on PSAs on the left menu.

Summer Food Service Program

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is spreading the word to summer programs nationwide about its Summer Food Service Program. This national program helps states fill in the summer meal gap for low-income children. The program reimburses organizations that serve meals during the summer months. Sites include libraries, schools, churches, recreation centers, playgrounds, parks, and camps.

Download, read, and share [this helpful tip sheet](#) on how you can help feed kids this summer, and [click here](#) for a handout with tips on how your library can partner with food sites. And check out this webinar:

Read and Feed! Connecting kids to Libraries and Summer Meals (USDA)

May 2, 1:00-2:00 MT

If you want to increase participation at your library during the summer, look for a cool new partnership, or learn more from USDA experts about how to start your own summer feeding site, join this webinar. Space is limited and registration will conclude Thursday. [Click here to register](#).

SRP Crafts and Science Experiments on Pinterest

CSLP (Collaborative Summer Library Program) now has Pinterest pages to demonstrate some of the crafts and experiments in the SRP manual (along with some new ideas):

- [Kids](#)
- [Teens](#)
- [Adults](#)

SRP National Partners

CSLP has several exciting partnerships this year. From Bedtime Math to National Geographic to the Lunar and Planetary Institute, the partners have much to offer libraries. [Check them all out here](#).

STEM Fun from the State Library

Ashley Kazyaka from the CO State Library recently [wrote this article](#) for *School Library Journal* about a presentation she led at the CATS (Children and Teen Services Division of CAL) Conference last January, featuring fun STEM activities that libraries can do during their summer reading programs. From Makey Makeys to Scratch to making your own ice cream, kids will have so much fun with these activities that they won't know how much they're learning about STEM!



Tips for Stopping Summer Slide

Homeroom, the U.S. Department of Education's blog, posted [this piece](#) with tips for families on

preventing summer slide by age group. Libraries are featured! It's a good piece to share with parents.

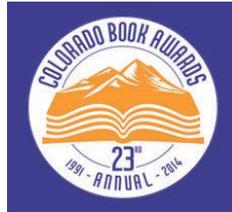
Save the Date: Summer Learning Day is June 20

Consider hosting a community-wide Summer Learning Day on June 20 to provide a unique opportunity to raise awareness about the vital role summer plays to reduce summer slide. Visit the [Summer Learning Day website](#) to learn more and find many useful resources.

Book Nook

Colorado Book Awards Finalists Announced

Colorado Humanities announced the finalists for the 23rd annual Colorado Book Awards. The 16 categories of book awards include, along with their finalists:



Children's Literature:

- *Cowboy Up!: Ride the Navajo Rodeo* by Nancy Bo Flood & Jan Sonnemair
- *The Mystery of Darwin's Frog* by Marty Crump, Steve Jenkins, & Edel Rodriguez
- *The Tumbleweed Came Back* by Carmela LaVigna-Coyle & Kevin Rechin

Juvenile Literature:

- *Grave Images* by Jenny Goebel
- *The Miner's Cap* by Ann N. Black
- *A Summer of Sundays* by Lindsay Eland

Young Adult Literature:

- *Ascendant* by Rebecca Taylor
- *Backwards* by Todd Mitchell

This annual program celebrates the accomplishments of Colorado's outstanding authors, editors, illustrators and photographers. Who will this year's winners be? Find out June 13!

Teens' Top 10 Announced

YALSA announced 25 nominees for its [Teens' Top Ten list](#). Teens are encouraged to read them before the national Teens' Top Ten vote, which will [take place online](#) August 15 through Teen Read Week. The 10 nominees that receive the most votes will be named the official Teens' Top Ten. This is a "teen choice" list,

in which teens nominate and choose their favorite books of the previous year. Nominators are members of teen book groups in 16 school and public libraries around the country. For info, ideas, and resources for libraries to use to incorporate the Teens' Top Ten into summer reading/learning programs, download the free [Teens' Top Ten Toolkit](#). Link to [this video](#) featuring the nominees from your website and social media. Follow the discussion on Twitter with #ttt14.

Top 10 Children's Books: Librarian as Super Hero

[This fun list](#) highlights 10 titles for kids in which librarians are featured positively.

One Book 4 Colorado

Thank You!

Thanks so much for delivering another great year of One Book 4 Colorado in your communities! This literacy project is really taking hold and we had some exciting firsts this year:

- 75,000 books purchased!
- Billboards donated!
- 322 Facebook likes and 303 Twitter followers!
- Enhanced parent survey!

With your input, the program can continue to improve in future years. Please take a few minutes to complete [this online survey](#) about the program by May 7 (and thanks to the 50 libraries that have already completed the survey!). Your feedback will also help attract funding so the program can continue!



Author Jeremy Tankard reading & drawing at the Children's Museum of Denver (left) and Ft. Carson Army Base. For lots more photos, see the [One Book 4 CO Facebook page!](#)

Parent Feedback

Parents responding to the parent survey have given

some great feedback! Here are just a few stories:

“After reading the book we discussed how you can always change your attitude by changing how you look at the situation you're in. Currently his attitude has changed for the better, both at home and at school. I'm unsure if it is directly related to the reading of this book, but either way it is a great change! :) I'd like to thank you for the book and the opportunity it presented.”

“My son was really thrilled that there was something special for four year olds. He heard the book read at story time at the library so he does all the voices the librarian did when we read it.”

“I'm very happy that the state of Colorado understands the importance of a child owning their own book. I'm glad so many other children will have the opportunity to own at least one book.”

“My child was very excited when she, and all her preschool classmates, received the same book. Her teacher read it them at school and she came home and wanted us to read it to her again immediately. My husband and I love any program that fosters a love of reading in children. Thank you for the book!”

More on Jeremy Tankard

[This recent blog post](#) features Jeremy Tankard, including info on his newest book (as illustrator), *Here Comes Destructosaurus!*, a drawing demo video, a library advocacy video, and a bit of an interview.

Timely Tidbits

CLiC (Colorado Library Consortium) Spring Workshops



The annual CLiC Spring Workshops are complete for 2014, and they were excellent (thanks, CLiC!). Catch the slides and handouts from some of the sessions [here](#).

April is National Autism Awareness Month

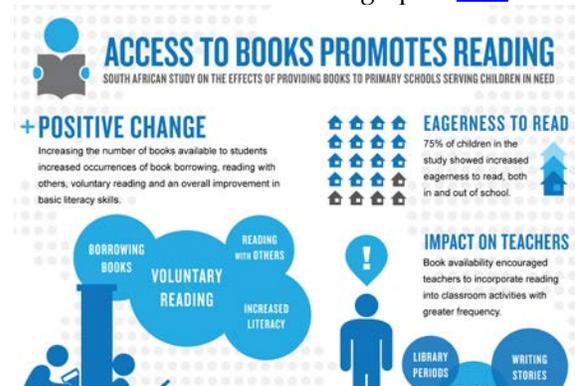
To highlight National Autism Awareness Month, here are several resources for libraries:

- [This list](#) from *School Library Journal* highlights books for students who have been diagnosed on the spectrum as well as their educators and families, intended to broaden understanding of diverse individual needs and highlight the enormous potential for achievement.
- *Public Libraries Online* highlighted the important topic in its recent article, “[Implementing Programs for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder](#).”
- The website [Libraries and Autism: We're Connected](#) offers a wealth of resources—research, a video, PR materials, parent handouts, program templates, strategies, and more—to help library staff start or enhance programs for kids on the autism spectrum.



The Benefits of Book Availability

The organization First Book has come out with a new study demonstrating that having access to books has a multitude of positive benefits for kids. Check out the article and infographic [here](#).



First Book offers another infographic on the topic as well; [click here to view](#).

New Competency Index for the Library Field

WebJunction has updated its [Competency Index for the Library Field](#). With ever-increasing economic, social, and educational demands, libraries have experienced dramatic changes in community needs and the tools available to serve those needs since the original publication of the index in 2009. Three elements have been emphasized in the new publication: 21st century skills, accountability, and

community engagement. Sections on children's and teen staff are included.

E-books and Reading Comprehension

[Two small studies](#) indicate that while students are more engaged with and motivated by e-books than by print books, they tend to skip over more text and info in e-books, resulting in lower reading comprehension. The authors of the studies stress they are not condemning e-books but rather encouraging educators and e-book publishers to proceed thoughtfully when working with e-books with children.

Importance of Diversity for Children

The Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) announced the release of [The Importance of Diversity in Library Programs and Material Collections for Children](#) white paper, by Jamie Campbell Naidoo, PhD. ALSC encourages you to use it as a tool to advocate for additional resources that ensure your library's programs celebrate cultural diversity and provide opportunities for developing bridges of understanding all year long.

Save the Dates for Outside the Lines

Outside the Lines will be a weeklong celebration, Sept. 14-20, 2014, demonstrating the creativity and innovation happening in libraries. Libraries can participate by hosting at least one event or campaign during the week that gets people thinking—and talking—about libraries in a different way, gets the community actively involved, highlights how the library is relevant to people's lives, and is fun! Libraries can sign up to participate, see a list of participating libraries, and view videos that provide creative inspiration at the [Outside the Lines website](#).

Screen Free Week—May 5-11

During this week, celebrated around the world, children, families, schools, and communities are encouraged to spend 7 days turning OFF entertainment screen media to *unplug* and play, read, daydream, create, explore nature, and spend time with family and friends. [The official website](#) offers lots of tips for celebrating with events, pledges, and more. One children's librarian in Wisconsin is adapting this in her library to be [Less](#)

[Screen Week](#) for a more realistic week; check out the activity log she created for families with suggestions on great activities they can do instead of being glued to devices.

Growing Healthy Readers

The Campaign for Grade-Level Reading's Healthy Readers Team offers a series of resource guides making the connection between health and learning in the early years. The guides, entitled "[Growing Healthy Readers: Taking Action to Support the Health Determinants of Early School Success](#)," show how to incorporate children's health and learning priorities into action plans for improving school readiness, school attendance and summer learning. Each guide includes research documenting the effects on learning and strategies for improving. The resource includes this infographic:



How Libraries Are Changing

These recent articles give an outsider's view of how libraries are changing:

["What Will Become of the Library?"](#), Slate
["Libraries are dying? Think again,"](#) CNN

5 Hidden Benefits of Reading for Kids

Well, they're not so hidden to those that work in libraries, but [this article](#) presents an overview of some critical benefits of reading to young children from *Huffington Post*.

STEM Spot

Live STEM Role Model Webcasts

JASON's [Live STEM Career Role Model series](#) features a diverse mix of scientists and engineers discussing their career paths. Participants can connect with these role models by submitting questions during each live webcast (prior webcasts are available archived).

Marvel Moon Webinars Archived

ALA's Public Programs Office recently offered 2 "Marvel Moon" webinars with astronomy experts from the Lunar and Planetary Institute (LPI). Part of LPI's "Explore!" series, the "Marvel Moon" learning module covers a number of kids' activities that are fun, low-cost, can be flexibly implemented, and are designed for non-school settings. There are also special "Marvel Moon" comic book characters, all designed after real planetary scientists. [The webinars are available archived for free.](#)

STEM Infographic

The organization First Book created [this infographic](#) on the importance of STEM education in kids' lives.

Early Literacy Corner

CLEL Conference—Save the Date!

CLEL has announced the details for its annual conference: September 19, 8:30-4:30 at the Lowry Convention

Center in Denver. Fee: \$45, which includes lunch, a great keynote speaker, informative sessions, networking, fun, and more. CLEL has also issued a call for presenters to present 50 minute sessions; see more and submit your presentation proposal [here](#).



Every Child Ready to Read Ning

If you're not familiar with it already, the [Every Child Ready to Read \(ECRR\) Ning](#) is a great place to share resources, ideas, photos, and more around storytimes using the ECRR framework. Sign up today—the online resource is free!

Begin Smart Video

[This 15 minute video](#) from the Library of Virginia is chock full of the whys and hows of early literacy. A range of young children and caregivers demonstrate ways to read together from infancy to toddlerhood. Consider linking to this resource on your library's website, sharing it via social media, or adding it to a handout or newsletter.

Teen Zone

News from YALSA:

- Register now for the 2014 YA Literature Symposium in Austin, TX, Nov. 14-16th. Check out the preliminary program, apply for a travel stipend grant and/or register [here](#).
- Everything you need to plan a great 2014 Teen Read Week celebration is [now online](#). TRW will be celebrated Oct. 12 – 18 with the theme "Turn Dreams into Reality @ your library." Join the discussion on Twitter with #TRW14.
- Each Monday in March YALSA held online discussions with leaders in the field about a different topic from [our new report](#). Speakers included Mimi Ito, Buffy Hamilton Renee Hobbs and K-Fai Steele. To access the recordings, [click here](#).
- Join YALSA as we count down the 100 days til summer. Every 25 days we're hosting an online forum and giving away prizes. [Learn more or participate here](#). Free forums include:
 - May 2 – Building summer learning into existing reading programs
 - May 27 – Tips for marketing to teens
- YALSA's Makerspace Resources Taskforce created an awesome new resource just for you! Access it and other tools and tips [here](#).
- Check out [these highlights](#) from 2014 Teen Tech Week.
- YALSA [offers a tool](#) for evaluating a public library's overall level of success in providing services to teens with areas for evaluation derived from YALSA's Competencies for

Librarians Serving Youth: Young Adults Deserve the Best. Potential users of this tool include library administrators, library trustees, teen services librarians, and community members hoping to assess a library's commitment to teen services. The tool is not intended to be an evaluation of teen services librarians, but rather of an institution's program; however, some things do apply specifically to teen services staff.

- This [new infographic](#) from YALSA uses data from the 2012 PLA PLDS (Public Library Data Service Statistical Report) to illustrate how libraries serve teens. Print it out and share it with community VIPs and policy makers, and link to it on your website and social media.



- Looking for a local author for a teen program or other event? The YALSA Wiki has an extensive list of [YA Authors by State and Country](#), as well as resources and tips for planning an author visit. Additions to the list are always welcome!

CO Libraries in the Press

Moffat County Libraries Celebrate National Library Week and One Book 4 CO

[Moffat County Libraries](#) celebrated National Library Week with its community by having daily drawings for prizes for patrons, promoting its SRP, and giving away copies of *Grumpy Bird* during the town's Celebrate Children Festival and to patrons at the library.

VISTA Volunteer at the Wilkinson Public Library

A VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) volunteer completed some great [literacy and anti-poverty programs](#) in mountain towns in southwest CO, including some in conjunction with the Wilkinson Public Library in Telluride.

Denver Public Library Celebrated National Library Week, Too

[Denver Public Library](#) also celebrated National Library Week by celebrating its record number of patrons served in 2013, its outreach efforts, and its ideaLAB, a space for teens to explore computer and A/V hardware and software.

2014 Pikes Peak All Reads

The 13th annual [All Pikes Peak Reads](#) program has begun, and the Pikes Peak Library District announced the program titles for adults, teens, and children. This year's selections were chosen for their extraordinary characters striving for individual freedoms and the social and political rights of others, and will be used to start important community-wide discussions.

Renovations in Pueblo

The reinvented and reimagined second floor at the [Robert Hoag Rawlings Public Library](#) in Pueblo reopened recently featuring many updates and improvements, including a tech bar with the latest tablets that library patrons can use and test out, the addition of the Idea Factory—a space to hold demos and classes—and cool new tech like the Oculus Rift virtual reality goggles.

STEM in Action, continued from p. 1

CSL: How can public libraries get kids and teens more interested/involved in STEM?

Dr. Richard: I think one of the best ways to get kids and teen interested in STEM is to introduce them to people who are really excited about their work in STEM fields. Providing opportunities for kids to meet STEM mentors and to see that STEM professionals aren't all "geeks" or "nerds" is really important. I think libraries can help with the excitement factor – providing fun. Libraries can also help to reach kids who might not otherwise be exposed to STEM professionals.

CSL: Tell us a little about your experience presenting at Mesa County Libraries' Jr. Scientist Program, an excellent monthly series in which a science professor from Colorado Mesa University

hosts a hands-on program about his/her specialty for 8-12 year olds.

Dr. Richard: The best part about my presentation at MCPLD's Jr. Scientist Program was the excitement of the kids! One girl even came up and asked for my autograph afterward! I was pretty nervous because it's been a while since I last gave a talk for young kids, but the kids' enthusiasm quickly washed away all nervousness. They asked great questions and were so enthusiastic. Several parents also attended with their kids, got pretty engaged in the demonstration and also asked challenging questions.

CSL: Do you have other ideas for ways that STEM professionals and libraries can collaborate?

Dr. Richard: Getting kids involved in hands-on science, whether it's a demonstration by a STEM professional, or an activity where students actually design and build something, or perform an experiment are great ways to expose kids to STEM. When I was in high school, I participated in a weekend workshop hosted by the Society of Women Engineers. During the workshop, we (the students) were put in groups and tasked with designing a new

bridge for the pachyderm pavilion at the Audubon Zoo. We had to design the bridge and specify the materials. Professional engineers pretended to be vendors for concrete and steel, and acted as consultants for us. We had to call the vendors for cost estimates and ultimately cost out our bridge design. That workshop was a really powerful experience for me in shaping my career path. Before the workshop, I had no idea what an engineer did. The workshop was my first exposure to the challenges and rewards of engineering problem solving.

CSL: Is there anything else you'd like to pass along to library staff?

Dr. Richard: I love libraries and books, and appreciate that libraries are finding ways to remain relevant in our rapidly changing world. Actually, it's an interesting STEM-related shift, that for better or for worse, libraries have become amazing high-tech centers. I don't ever want to see real books go away, but I've read about libraries that have "maker" labs with 3-D printers available for public use. What a different world we are moving into, where kids can go to the library and "print" a 3-D object out of plastic that they've designed.

When kids look up to great scientists the way they do to great musicians and actors, civilization will jump to the next level.

-Author Brian Greene